

Uncivil Liberties and the Empire's War on its own Citizens

By [Carolyn Baker](#)

Global Research, June 19, 2007

19 June 2007

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

In the seventh year of the current presidential administration which has eviscerated more aspects of the Bill of Rights and U.S. Constitution than any previous administration in American history, I recently had the opportunity of viewing a new documentary “Uncivil Liberties: What Lies Between Liberty and Security”, written and directed by Thomas Mercer. I am pleased to offer my review of the film; however, it is not possible for me to authentically review this work of art or any other pertaining to civil liberties without attaching to it my own addendum of the history of attacks on the well being of its citizens by the United States government.

Unlike Robert Greenwald’s “Unconstitutional” or Aaron Russo’s “America: From Freedom To Fascism”, Mercer’s film is not a documentary but fiction, closer in purpose to the genre of “Star Wars”, “Fahrenheit 451”, or “Brazil.” It is intentionally murky in its message, filled with purposeful ambiguity, devoid of stark contrasts between good guys and bad guys, with everything in shades of gray. Every character has his/her faults—like life.

Mercer’s DVD jacket states that “Political intrigue abounds in a complex upside down world as militia assassin, Mike Wilson, secretly decides to renounce the violence his job demands, and Homeland Security Official, Cynthia Porter, purposely sabotages a government spying operation. Consequently, both must now face paying the price for betraying the organizations they had faithfully served.”

According to Mercer, the over arching message of his film is about taking a personal stand of conscience even when doing so goes against community values and places one at great personal risk. The quality of filming is excellent as is most of the acting. For having such a low budget, Mercer did exceptionally well in producing a high-quality film. I believe that this film is well-suited for presentation to an individual or an audience of individuals who are not politically sophisticated but are just beginning to question the contradictions with which their government is replete—or perhaps even individuals who overall have few complaints about their government. Unlike a documentary “Uncivil Liberties” does not hit viewers in the face nor arm them with evidence, but rather stirs the pot gently by raising questions subtly and indirectly. It may be ideal for Americans who ingest mainstream media and have bought into the propagandistic litany of “you gotta give up your liberties in order to be safe.” The film poignantly portrays what happens to Cynthia Porter after living her life within such a paradigm.

My wish for viewers of “Uncivil Liberties” is that the “graduate” to “America From Freedom To Fascism” as soon as possible, but they may not be able to do so without the bridge that “Uncivil Liberties” could provide them in order to do so.

While it is true that the current administration's violations of civil liberties is unprecedented, it is also true that the ruling elite of America from its inception have always been reluctant to fully commit to the principles of a democratic republic. When the Founding Fathers, those rich white boys who drafted the Constitution, were ready to send it to the states to be ratified, they were confronted with so-called "radicals" of the small business and working classes who insisted that the document contain a Bill of Rights. Kicking and screaming to the contrary, the founders eventually capitulated to those demands and agreed to insert the first ten amendments.

The United States is an embarrassingly young nation. Unlike citizens of European or Asian societies that have existed for centuries, Americans remain pathetically naïve about the forces that drive their government and its corporatist apparatus. They have not witnessed incarceration in ghettos or gulags or mass liquidations and purges such as Eastern European nations did under Hitler or as the Soviet Union did under Stalin. With extraordinary assistance from its leaders, Americans have managed throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries, to persevere in denial about two things: 1) The reality that their government has become a full-fledged, bona fide, card-carrying empire, and 2) That their government is making war not only on other nations in other places, but that it is unequivocally making war on them in every facet of their lives.

In the face of the end of hydrocarbon energy, climate change, and global economic meltdown, denial of these two realities is nothing less than terrifying.

Nevertheless, I believe that if we briefly consider the confluence of the corporation and government from 1865 to the present, we will not only not be surprised by the unfolding of events, but we will comprehend that events could not have unfolded otherwise, given the fundamental assumptions regarding economics and the federal government's role in them.

[The following information is further detailed and carefully documented in my book, U.S. HISTORY UNCENSORED: What Your High School Textbook Didn't Tell You.]

First, we need to define empire: "A political unit having an extensive territory or comprising a number of territories or nations and ruled by a single supreme authority."

Many individuals do concur that the United States is an empire and that it is covertly targeting its own citizens in the same manner that it blatantly claims to target radical Islamic fundamentalist terrorists domestically and around the world. However, the majority of Americans are decreasingly able to deny that the human and economic drain produced by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan ostensibly as a "result" of the September 11 attacks, the unprecedented shredding of the Constitution and individual civil liberties sanctioned by the Patriot Act that we are now witnessing, the assault on the poor and middle class in issues of employment, health care, pension funds and retirement savings, inflation, and of course, the astronomical federal deficit, and some 4 trillion dollars "missing" from the federal government are formidable assaults on themselves. For any conscious, truth-seeking American, our contemporary milieu demonstrates that each of us is the empire's next meal.

In a 2003 article by Mike Ruppert "Eating The Chosen People" which became Chapter 23 in his extraordinary book Crossing The Rubicon, he articulated a litany of methods in which the U.S. government, in tandem with its ruling elite, is devouring its citizens, its infrastructure, and its ecosystem. But this is what empires do; that's their job.

But while all of this has become painfully obvious during the past seven years, a clear analysis of U.S. history from the end of the Civil War to the present moment reveals that the current monster's DNA components were circulating throughout the organism, never dormant but undetected by all but those who were being engulfed by them or those whose political, historical, and ethical lens enabled them to read the tea leaves of burgeoning tyranny.

Let us begin in 1864 with the famous quote from Abraham Lincoln only a few months before his death.

"I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. . . . corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed."

Post-Civil War America witnessed unprecedented, exponential growth of corporations—not only a proliferation in the amount of them, but an augmentation of prodigious power among them. Many readers are no doubt familiar with the Santa Clara vs. Southern Pacific Railroad decision by the Supreme Court in 1886 which declared that the corporation was legally equivalent to a PERSON with regard to protections afforded by the 14th Amendment. As if this ruling were not frightening enough, add to this reality the social philosophy of America's corporate tycoons in the late-nineteenth and early- twentieth centuries. The majority, including John D. Rockefeller, E.H. Harriman, Andrew Carnegie, and John Harvey Kellogg were proponents of eugenics or selective breeding set in motion by the desire to eliminate "undesirable" human beings. The "Robber Barons", as historian Matthew Josephson called them, contributed vast sums of money to the junk science of eugenics, and forced sterilization of the mentally ill and other "undesirables" which continued into the 1970s.

It is during this era that we see massive exploitation of immigrants and workers in American industry, the absence of health and safety regulations that would protect workers and consumers, and the proliferation of monopolies that decimated small business and other kinds of competition. Enter Theodore Roosevelt on his white horse, a so-called Progressive, who resoundingly terminated these egregious abuses and ushered in a more equalitarian society—or so traditional American history teaches us.

Historians have made much of the political, economic and social changes brought about in American society by Progressivism. While it is true that the amount of government regulation of industry passed by legislators in response to popular demands was unprecedented, it is also true that the Progressive movement repeatedly failed to question the fundamental underpinnings of the capitalist system and, in fact, aspired to make government function as an "ideal corporation." Many revisionist historians, such as Gabriel Kolko, speculate that because the essential nature of capitalism was never questioned by the Progressives, regulation was put into place which brought about limited, specific reforms for the well being of workers, consumers and the poor, but which actually served to contain protest movements and maintain order and thereby, ultimately served business interests. In his book, *THE TRIUMPH OF CONSERVATISM*, Kolko uses the term "political capitalism" to describe the fundamental underpinning of American society that the Progressive movement did not challenge. He says:

“It was capitalist social relationships, not just economic factors that triumphed—the assumption that certain individuals, because of heritage, ethnicity, socio-economic status, etc. had the right to accumulate phenomenal wealth at the expense of other human beings and the environment. Although certain individuals who embraced socialism challenged the social relationships of political capitalism, by and large, progressives did not.”

The crucial factor in American experience was the nature of economic power which required political tools to rationalize the economic process, and that resulted in a synthesis of politics and economics.

The Post-World War I 1920s saw an epidemic of the symbiosis of government and corporations, with a great deal of assistance from the creation of the Federal Reserve in 1913, so that on the eve of the Great Depression in 1929, America is nothing less than a corporate state, which Mussolini said was the essential definition of fascism. Three presidents in a row, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover stated unequivocally that “The business of America is business.” In 1922, General Motors made a conscious decision to kill the trolley system in a number of cities, not just Los Angeles, and over the course of the next two decades, succeeded in making the automobile the nation’s preferred method of transportation.

We should not then be surprised with America’s fascination with fascism in the 1930s and the countless corporate entities in the United States which helped finance the Third Reich. In 2002, the Village Voice ran a fabulous series by Edwin Black, author of *IBM And The Holocaust*, entitled “Final Solutions” which explained IBM’s punch card system that facilitated the Reich in calculating and monitoring its Jewish population and making sure the trains ran on time.

But while Germany was busy exterminating Jews, gay and lesbian people, Roma and Jehovah’s Witnesses, the United States was experimenting on African American males infected with syphilis in a small town in Alabama. As part of its study, the Tuskegee Experiment denied treatment to some 150 men who later died of the disease, along with several of their wives who had also been infected. As in the days of Progressivism, another Roosevelt entered the morass of human suffering in the United States and instituted a New Deal that did in fact alleviate a great deal of the nation’s misery. Yet, once again, political capitalism was neither explored nor challenged, and as Howard Zinn summarizes:

When the New Deal was over, capitalism remained intact. The rich still controlled the nation’s wealth, as well as its laws, courts, police, newspapers, churches, colleges. Enough help had been given to enough people to make Roosevelt a hero to millions, but the same system that had brought depression and crisis—the system of waste, of inequality, of concern for profit over human need—remained.

Retired Army Special Forces Sergeant and Vietnam Veteran, Stan Goff says that:

“It is now very clear that Franklin Roosevelt developed financial designs on the colonies of the British Empire, and that he maneuvered throughout the war to let others – particularly the Soviet Union, but also England and France – take the brunt of Hitler’s aggression to weaken them, while he built up the geographically war-immune US industrial base, and positioned the US to be a post-war creditor and the new super-power.”

It is crucial to understand, however, that the “cure” for the Great Depression was not the New Deal, but rather World War II, entered by the United States after Pearl Harbor in 1941. It would not be the last war that America’s ruling elite would enter in order to distract from or ameliorate its economic woes.

The war was concluded in the first week of August, 1945 after two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. Meanwhile, strange things were happening in Oakridge, Tennessee. The world would not know exactly what those strange things were until a curious journalist, named Eileen Welsome, began poking around in some dusty boxes of stored documents at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico in the early 1990s. Published in 1993, Welsome’s Pulitzer-prize-winning book, *THE PLUTONIUM FILES*, documents numerous radiation experiments on human beings in the 1940s. Meanwhile, the Central Intelligence Agency was conducting secret experiments with LSD on human beings without their knowledge in a now-infamous program called MK ULTRA which also used hypnosis, electroshock therapy, and psychosurgery and which continued into the 1970s. A more elaborate list of secret experiments of this nature can be found online by Googling “Secret U.S. Human Biological Experimentation.”

The most enduring legacy of World War II was the corporate state transformed into the military industrial complex—a term first uttered by Dwight Eisenhower in his farewell speech in 1961, five years after a relatively unknown Texas geophysicist named Marion King Hubbert predicted that oil production in the United States would peak between the late 1960s and the early 70s. But who cared? America was busy fighting a Cold War, sending men to the moon, and fine-tuning its robust empire. But in order to achieve all of this, more ravaging of its citizenry would be required. One of the most significant events in the twentieth century was the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947 which was forbidden by law to operate within the United States, but almost from the moment of its creation it began violating that law and has never stopped doing so.

Hence, in addition to the 58,000 expendable offspring annihilated in Southeast Asia between 1963 and 1975, America financed its voracious escapades of the 1970s and 80s with extensive opium and cocaine trafficking in Southeast Asia and Latin America which found its way in gargantuan quantities to the streets of American cities by way of obscure, podunk places like Mena, Arkansas and more familiar, official locations like Ft. Hood, Texas. The human and economic capital of South Central Los Angeles was devastated with a CIA-engendered crack-cocaine epidemic, but the Department Of Housing and Urban Development fared well and perfected the lessons learned in this incipient pilot program to assist in the largest theft in the history of the world up to that time, the Savings and Loan debacle.

This particular juncture in American history is especially important because the *modus operandi* of the empire distinctly changes in flavor.

In 1981 National Security Decision Directive 1 (NSDD 1) was signed by President Ronald Reagan which would re-organize the National Security Council (NSC) which is the arm of the CIA in the White House. Subsequently, a second document called NSDD 2 would be signed, formalizing the establishment of a Special Situation Group (SSG) crisis management staff chaired by Bush.

On Sunday, March 22, 1981, the Washington Post published the headline “WHITE HOUSE REVAMPS TOP POLICY ROLES; Bush to Head Crisis Management”. The Post continued:

Partly in an effort to bring harmony to the Reagan high command, it has been decided that Vice President George Bush will be placed in charge of a new structure for national security crisis management, according to senior presidential assistants. This assignment will amount to an unprecedented role for a vice president in modern times.

In 1986, in an effort to overcome traditional agency reluctance, President Reagan issued Executive Order 12615 requiring departments and agencies to establish and fulfill ambitious privatization goals. The order also created the Office of Privatization within the Office of Management and Budget to oversee the program, and established an independent Commission on Privatization to study and recommend opportunities for privatization within the federal government. Although few, if any, of the recommendations that emerged from this effort were enacted at the time, several of the programs first proposed, developed, and advocated by the Reagan Administration (the Alaska Power Marketing Administration, the U.S. Enrichment Corporation, the National Helium Reserve, and the Naval Petroleum Reserve at Elk Hills, California) eventually were approved for privatization by the 104th Congress and the Clinton White House. When completed, these privatization divestitures yielded more than \$3 billion in revenues to the federal government.

This constructed a closer relationship between the Presidency and the Central Intelligence Agency than had existed since the creation of the CIA in 1947, and the use of private corporate contractors to do government work secretly (ostensibly for reasons of national security) created two very negative realities:

Private corporate contractors do not have to be accountable for the work they do or how they use the money allocated to them and A black budget could be created in which government money is being spent without the oversight of Congress and the American people. This was a recipe for fraud and corruption to become standard operating procedure in the federal government.

Thus, the empire's economic devourment of its own citizens which had been going on since at least the end of the Civil War had now become institutionalized.

With the assistance of a president whose symbiosis with corporate America was palpable, despite his rhetoric about championing the middle class, the 1990s gave us the global economy, NAFTA, and the Walmartization of the world, resulting in energy-consumption on steroids. In 1997, a more blatant advocate of geo-strategic hegemony, Zbigniew Brzezinski, also a Democrat, published his infamous THE GRAND CHESSBOARD, detailing the manner in which the United States should dominate the world politically, economically, and militarily, particularly, Eurasia, the precise area where the U.S. military has been engaged during the past six years for the last remaining drops of oil on the planet.

In a 2006 poll taken nationwide, 84% of Americans believe that the U.S. government is not telling the truth in its official story regarding the September 11 attacks.

Whereas shortly after the September 11 attacks it was common to hear virulent opposition by Americans to the theory that the U.S. government orchestrated the attacks because "our government would never harm its own citizens", in the light of the assaults on the citizenry of America enumerated above, it is less common, to hear this rebuttal and more common, in my experience, to hear comments like "I think it was an inside job" or "there's something fishy about it that doesn't add up"—comments that only a few of us dared utter six years ago.

But the empire's war on its citizens did not begin with 9/11. A scrupulous analysis of American history from 1865 to the present underscores the reality that the United States government has repeatedly harmed or attempted to harm its citizens on innumerable occasions. Not mentioned above, but particularly relevant to September 11, was the Pentagon's Operation Northwoods in 1962 which proposed a U.S. military attack on unmanned military planes disguised as commercial airliners and blowing up ocean liners, inflicting heavy casualties, then blaming the tragedies on Castro in order to incite pro-war sentiment among the American public in order to wage war on Cuba.

The current administration, marinated in petroleum, is probably the most blatant in devouring the citizens of the empire since American colonists lived under the domination of Great Britain. I will not recite the litany of its abuses; we are living them even as I speak. While each one seems more egregious than the last, it may well be that the most reprehensible is the fact that this administration has been well aware of Peak Oil and global warming and is doing nothing about them—at least for the citizens of the empire. Bush, Cheney, and former CIA Director, James Woolsey, flaunt their solar-paneled bunkers and their infinite supply of food and water to the media, yet Peak Oil remains one of the best-kept secrets in America.

History will indeed record that in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, a small group of ruling elite in the most powerful nation on earth, which consumed the largest amount of hydrocarbon energy on the planet, were well aware of natural phenomena called Peak Oil and global warming, and knowing full well the catastrophic consequences of that phenomenon, they bunkered their own homes with solar panels and infinite quantities of food and water, yet failed to disclose information vital to the health and safety of all life forms worldwide and the ecosystems themselves.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is a crime against humanity.

At this moment in history we are witnessing the convergence of three phenomena that is unprecedented in human history: Peak Oil, climate chaos, and global economic meltdown. That convergence changes all the rules and will force humankind to think and act outside any previously-known boxes, and the fundamental underpinning of all attempts to navigate this daunting convergence will be local solutions.

Yet even as I write those words, I am well aware that in a country where the government and ruling elite have made war on the citizenry for at least 142 years, the titans of power who are bunkering down in preparation for chaos have also devised elaborate strategies for controlling it. To what extent will that warfare on the citizenry pale by comparison the crimes of September 11? How fast can viewers of "Uncivil Liberties" upgrade their awareness to the futuristic but highly plausible realities of "Children Of Men"? If the planet and its inhabitants survive for another twenty years, will Americans reflect on the "good ole days" of 2007 and smile sullenly at the term "civil liberties" which in 2027 will have become meaningless and archaic in a ghastly, totalitarian dystopia of extinction, violence, and repression?

I hold little hope for a mass awakening of consciousness from the comatose American "consumeristic", petro-dependent, throw-away, entitlement trance in which this society appears immured. Rather, I am inspired and buoyed by small groups of individuals who are willing to seize their options, utilizing the civil liberties they now have and the innate inner authority at the core of their humanity from which all liberty flows, in order to partner with

others who are willing to tell the truth about what human beings are doing to this planet-and in so doing, provide an alternative for themselves.

As all authentic revolutionaries and mystics well know, it isn't about how long one lives, but about who is doing the living. Empire can only enslave and destroy, but its citizens have the option to disconnect from the empire and its paradigm. Thomas Paine told us in 1775 that we have the power to begin the world over again. In 2007 we may not have the power to begin the world over again, but we do have the power to begin our world again. The only new paradigm will be the one we create, and that is the civilist of liberties!

Carolyn Baker is a professor of history and author of U.S. History Uncensored: What Your High School Textbook Did Not Tell You

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Carolyn Baker](#), Global Research, 2007

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Carolyn Baker](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca